

INSPECTION REPORT

SOUTHFIELD JUNIOR SCHOOL

Luton

LEA area: Luton

Unique reference number: 109580

Headteacher: Mrs M Redfern

Reporting inspector: Mrs H Ranger
OFSTED number: 22223

Dates of inspection: 2 – 5 July 2001

Inspection number: 193091

Full inspection carried out under section 10 of the School Inspections Act 1996

© Crown copyright 2001

This report may be reproduced in whole or in part for non-commercial educational purposes, provided that all extracts quoted are reproduced verbatim without adaptation and on condition that the source and date thereof are stated.

Further copies of this report are obtainable from the school. Under the School Inspections Act 1996, the school must provide a copy of this report and/or its summary free of charge to certain categories of people. A charge not exceeding the full cost of reproduction may be made for any other copies supplied.

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Type of school:	Junior
School category:	Community
Age range of pupils:	7 - 11 years
Gender of pupils:	Mixed
School address:	Pastures Way Luton
Postcode:	LU4 0PE
Telephone number:	01582 604876
Fax number:	01582 472615
Appropriate authority:	The Governing Body
Name of chair of governors:	Mr D Owens
Date of previous inspection:	February 1997

INFORMATION ABOUT THE INSPECTION TEAM

Team members			Subject responsibilities	Aspect responsibilities
22223	Helen Ranger	Registered inspector	Science Art and design Design and technology Information and communication technology Equal opportunities English as an additional language	How high are standards? a) The school's results and achievements How well are pupils taught? How well is the school led and managed? What should the school do to improve further?
9519	Sue Pritchard	Lay inspector		How high are standards? b) Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development. How well does the school care for its pupils? How well does the school work in partnership with parents?
17969	Peter Brock	Team inspector	Mathematics Music Physical education Religious education Special educational needs	
15028	Janet Dye	Team inspector	English Geography History	How good are the curricular and other opportunities offered to pupils?

The inspection contractor was:

Cambridge Education Associates Ltd

Demeter House
Station Road
Cambridge
CB1 2RS

Any concerns or complaints about the inspection or the report should be raised with the inspection contractor. Complaints that are not satisfactorily resolved by the contractor should be raised with OFSTED by writing to:

The Complaints Manager
Inspection Quality Division
The Office for Standards in Education
Alexandra House
33 Kingsway
London WC2B 6SE

REPORT CONTENTS

	Page
PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT	7
Information about the school	
How good the school is	
What the school does well	
What could be improved	
How the school has improved since its last inspection	
Standards	
Pupils' attitudes and values	
Teaching and learning	
Other aspects of the school	
How well the school is led and managed	
Parents' and carers' views of the school	
PART B: COMMENTARY	
HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?	11
The school's results and pupils' achievements	
Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development	
HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?	13
HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?	15
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?	16
HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?	18
HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?	20
WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?	22
PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS	23
PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES	27

PART A: SUMMARY OF THE REPORT

INFORMATION ABOUT THE SCHOOL

Southfield Junior is an average sized community school with 218 pupils aged between seven and eleven. About two thirds of the pupils come from white United Kingdom backgrounds. The rest represent a wide range of minority ethnic groups or are from mixed-race families. A fifth of pupils do not speak English as their first language at home and the main community languages other than English are Bengali, Gujarati and Urdu. The proportion of pupils eligible for free school meals, at 28 per cent, is above the national average. A high number of pupils have special learning, physical or behavioural needs (33 per cent, including three pupils with Statements of Special Educational Need). When pupils enter the school in Year 3, their attainment, as shown in the national tests for seven-year-olds in recent years, is below average generally and is particularly low in writing.

HOW GOOD THE SCHOOL IS

This is a good school. Pupils are taught well and make good progress over time in relation to their attainment on admission, although the oldest pupils do not quite reach average standards in English, mathematics and science. The school is led and managed well by the headteacher and her staff. It gives good value for money.

What the school does well

- Provides good teaching in all age groups, which enables pupils to achieve well.
- Achieved high standards in the national tests for its 11-year-olds in 2000 when compared with schools with similar intakes.
- Achieves standards in information and communication technology and in religious education that are above average.
- Has effective ways of supporting pupils' moral, social and cultural development that promote good attitudes in pupils, good behaviour and good relationships.
- Has a staff that works well as an effective team for the benefit of the pupils and that is committed to continuing improvement.
- Offers a wide range of learning opportunities to its pupils through the curriculum and extra activities.
- Gives high levels of personal care to its pupils.

What could be improved

- The standards achieved by the oldest pupils in English, mathematics and science.
- Levels of pupils' attendance, which are well below the national average.
- The dialogue and partnership with parents and how these support children's learning.

The areas for improvement will form the basis of the governors' action plan.

HOW THE SCHOOL HAS IMPROVED SINCE ITS LAST INSPECTION

The school was last inspected in February 1997. Since then it has made good progress in the main areas identified for improvement and in other key features. Pupils' results in the national tests for eleven-year-olds have risen at a faster rate than the national trend, although overall standards in English, mathematics and science are currently below average in Year 6. Standards in geography and music have improved and are now satisfactory. Standards have risen in information technology and religious education. The teaching seen on this inspection was substantially better than at the time of the last report and the weaknesses identified then have been remedied. The curriculum is now planned more systematically and pupils' progress is assessed satisfactorily. The school's priorities for development are detailed and clear and systems for monitoring its success are being established. The school has not maintained its previous satisfactory attendance rate; contrary to the national trend, the rate has fallen.

STANDARDS

The table shows the standards achieved by 11-year-olds based on average point scores in National Curriculum tests.

Performance in:	compared with			
	all schools			similar schools
	1998	1999	2000	2000
English	E	C	C	A
Mathematics	E	D	D	B
Science	E	D	C	A

Key

well above average A
 above average B
 average C
 below average D
 well below average E

The school's results have improved in recent years at a higher rate than the national trend. Unconfirmed results for 2001 indicate a further increase in the proportion of pupils attaining the nationally expected Level 4 by the age of 11 but with fewer pupils achieving Level 5. This will mean that the school will substantially exceed the targets it set for itself in English and mathematics this year. Pupils achieve well over time in relation to their lower than average attainment on entry. By the age of 11, however, their standards in English, mathematics and science as seen in their work and in lessons are below average for this age group. Pupils do not always speak confidently with a wide vocabulary or easily tackle extended reading or writing projects. Their mental recall is slow in mathematics and they have limited skills in scientific enquiry. In all other subjects, pupils attain at least the levels expected nationally. Their attainment is above average in information and communication technology and in religious education.

PUPILS' ATTITUDES AND VALUES

Aspect	Comment
Attitudes to the school	Good. Pupils enjoy school and are keen to learn.
Behaviour, in and out of classrooms	Good behaviour by the vast majority in the classroom, around the school and in the playground. A small number of pupils have behaviour difficulties.
Personal development and relationships	Good. Pupils form good relationships. They respect others and take increasing responsibility as they get older.
Attendance	Rates are well below the national average.

The school is, overall, a friendly and orderly community with good relationships among pupils and between pupils and staff. There are high levels of respect for other people's feelings, values and beliefs. The small number of pupils whose behaviour is sometimes poor are handled well by adults. Attendance is falling in spite of the school's very good efforts to improve this.

TEACHING AND LEARNING

Teaching of pupils:	aged 7-11 years
Lessons seen overall	good

Inspectors make judgements about teaching in the range: excellent; very good; good; satisfactory; unsatisfactory; poor; very poor. 'Satisfactory' means that the teaching is adequate and strengths outweigh weaknesses.

All the lessons seen were at least satisfactory. Fifty-one per cent were good, a further three per cent very good and three per cent excellent. Teaching was satisfactory in English and good in mathematics, enabling pupils to make at least sound progress in literacy and numeracy. The school generally meets the needs of all pupils well, including those with special learning needs and those for whom English is not the first language. However, in mathematics and English the needs of the most capable pupils are not planned for as well as for other groups.

Lessons are interesting and planned well across the full range of the curriculum. Pupils enjoy their work and concentrate well. Teachers explain tasks clearly and organise their classrooms efficiently so that pupils understand what they are expected to do. They manage behaviour effectively and pupils are ready to learn and make good use of their time. The provision of homework is inconsistent between classes and currently does not support pupils' learning as well as it might.

OTHER ASPECTS OF THE SCHOOL

Aspect	Comment
The quality and range of the curriculum	Good. The required curriculum is in place and is supplemented well by extra activities.
Provision for pupils with special educational needs	Satisfactory, based on Individual Education Plans for pupils that are currently improving in quality.
Provision for pupils with English as an additional language	Effective identification of needs and the support given to these pupils enable them to take a full part in the curriculum.
Provision for pupils' personal, including spiritual, moral, social and cultural development	Good moral, social and cultural provision and satisfactory spiritual provision for pupils.
How well the school cares for its pupils	Very good procedures for pupils' welfare and effective monitoring of their personal development. Satisfactory systems for assessing pupils' academic attainment and progress in English, mathematics and science but few procedures in other subjects.

In addition to the statutory curriculum, there is a wide range of activities in personal, social and health education and in citizenship. Levels of extra-curricular clubs and visits are good. For pupils with special educational needs, support staff are generally used well and aid progress but, at times, they are underused in literacy and numeracy sessions.

The school cares well for its pupils. It monitors their attendance very well but not all parents are diligent in ensuring that their children attend as regularly as possible. There are satisfactory day-to-day contacts with parents but there is not yet a productive dialogue between parents and the school that supports children's learning as well as it could.

HOW WELL THE SCHOOL IS LED AND MANAGED

Aspect	Comment
Leadership and management by the headteacher and other key staff	Good. The headteacher has a clear and appropriate vision for the school's development and enables senior staff to manage the school well.
How well the governors fulfil their responsibilities	Satisfactorily. Governors are supportive of the school's work. Several are relatively inexperienced and are currently developing their role and their understanding of the school.
The school's evaluation of its performance	The school increasingly collects information on how well it is doing. Procedures for development planning successfully analyse and communicate detailed, relevant initiatives for the short-term and a longer-term strategic vision.
The strategic use of resources	Funds are directed well to areas of priority and their use is controlled and monitored well.

The staff and governors work well together and show a commitment to continuing improvement. They have, however, faced considerable recent problems in recruiting sufficient high quality staff to fill vacancies and to cover for staff absence. The school seeks best value satisfactorily in its spending decisions by questioning what it does and ensuring that money is spent prudently. Levels of staffing, accommodation and learning resources are sufficient overall. However, the hatted classrooms are small and lack the facilities for practical activities. They are sparsely furnished. These rooms and the classrooms in the main building are difficult to ventilate adequately and this does not promote a healthy environment for pupils. The school has tried hard to develop the outdoor area but its efforts have been frustrated by vandalism.

PARENTS' AND CARERS' VIEWS OF THE SCHOOL

Forty-five parents (21 per cent) responded to the pre-inspection questionnaire. Only six parents attended the meeting with inspectors.

What pleases parents most	What parents would like to see improved
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The school expects children to do their best. • Children make good progress. • The teaching is good. • Staff are approachable. • Children enjoy school. • The school helps their children to become mature and responsible. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The homework that is given. • Behaviour in the school. • The extent to which the school works closely with parents. • The leadership and management of the school. • Information about how children are getting on. • The range of activities outside lessons.

The inspection team broadly agrees with parents' positive views. The number of parents who disagreed with statements in the pre-inspection questionnaire represented a significant minority of those who responded. Inspectors consider that behaviour in the school is good, that the school is led and managed well by the headteacher and senior staff, that the information given to parents on pupils' progress is satisfactory and that there is a good range of activities outside lessons. The team shares parents' concerns about the consistency and effectiveness of the current homework arrangements. The school would benefit from improving its dialogue and partnership with parents with the aim of supporting children's progress more effectively.

PART B: COMMENTARY

HOW HIGH ARE STANDARDS?

The school's results and pupils' achievements

1. In the national tests for its oldest pupils in 2000, the school's results compared with the national picture were average in English and science and below average in mathematics. When results are compared with schools in similar circumstances (based on the eligibility for free school meals), they were well above average in English and science and above average in mathematics. The performance of boys and girls in the tests has been broadly similar, with small variations from subject to subject and year to year.
2. The trend in results for the school's 11-year-olds over the past five years shows that pupils' performance has improved at a higher rate than nationally, although mathematics has not been as strong as either English or science. In 2000, the school exceeded the performance target it set itself in English but did not meet its ambitious target for mathematics. Unconfirmed results of the tests in 2001 show a further improvement in the proportion of pupils who achieve the nationally expected Level 4 in all subjects but a drop in the proportion attaining Level 5. This is due to the higher numbers of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 group than in the previous year. Indications are that the school will have substantially exceeded the appropriate targets it set for 2001.
3. Inspection findings are that current pupils attain below average levels in English, mathematics and science. There are weaknesses in aspects of the subjects that may not have shown in the national tests. The main reasons why pupils' overall attainment appears to be at variance with the improving test results are:
 - in English, pupils' speaking skills and their extended writing and sustained reading are below the levels usually seen, and fewer than average attain Level 5;
 - in mathematics, pupils' mental recall and problem-solving skills are limited;
 - in science, pupils' skills in scientific enquiry and understanding do not match their sound recall of facts.
4. The attainment levels of pupils on entry to the school in Year 3, as shown by their National Curriculum test results at the age of seven, have been low in recent years, particularly in writing. Relative to this, pupils make at least satisfactory progress through the school and, often, their progress is good. This includes those with special educational needs. They make good progress towards the targets set for them in their Individual Education Plans and respond positively to the support they receive. They are enabled to take a full part in school activities. Those pupils whose first language is not English or who come to the school from other countries are supported well by their teachers and by specialist support when this is appropriate. This group of pupils has full access to the range of activities in the school. During the inspection, there was no significant variation in the rates of progress made by boys compared with girls
5. Standards in listening by the age of 11 are good but pupils do not match these in their speaking skills. This is especially the case in more formal situations such as structured discussions or presentations. In reading, while most pupils read with reasonable accuracy and fluency, few show a lively interest in a wide range of books and their reading lacks expression and depth. A substantial proportion of pupils do not easily write at length and the grammar and handwriting of a sizeable minority are below average in everyday use. In mathematics, the introduction of the National Numeracy Strategy and improvements in teaching have had a positive impact on raising standards. While pupils cover all aspects of the mathematics curriculum satisfactorily, their speed of mental recall is still slow and they do not easily apply their theoretical knowledge to practical situations which require mathematical understanding. In science, pupils cover the main factual topics of the curriculum thoroughly but lack a thorough understanding of scientific investigation and of practical applications of their knowledge.

6. Compared with the school's test results at the time of the last inspection, there has been a considerable improvement in the standards achieved by pupils in recent tests. However, there are aspects of English, mathematics and science outlined above that mean that overall standards still need to be improved if they are to reach the national average.
7. In information and communication technology, pupils have made recent rapid progress since the opening of the computer suite and they attain above average standards by the end of the key stage. They show an impressive breadth of knowledge and speed of working. Their work in this subject supports their progress in other subjects well.
8. By the end of Key Stage 2, pupils attain the levels seen in most schools in art and design, design and technology, geography, history, music and physical education. In design and technology, standards in designing are better than at the time of the last inspection. In geography and music, standards have risen overall. In religious education, pupils' attainment has improved and is now above the expectations of the local Agreed Syllabus. Pupils develop a wide understanding of major religious faiths and their practices.

Pupils' attitudes, values and personal development

9. Pupils' behaviour and concentration have improved since the last inspection. The pupils' attitudes and behaviour and their relationships in school are now good and pupils make good progress in their personal development. Although when in school pupils are keen and enthusiastic learners, attendance is unsatisfactory at well below the national average.
10. Pupils work hard and are proud of what they do. The majority of parents are satisfied that their children are happy in school. Pupils set about their work with a good deal of interest and enthusiasm and this is very beneficial to the rate of teaching and learning. Lessons proceed at an appropriate pace because the minimum of teaching time is spent on disciplinary matters. The pupils' keenness to take part in, for example, the good range of extra-curricular activities shows that they are eager to enjoy and conquer new skills. They are more than willing to talk about their achievements. These attitudes have a positive effect on the standards they attain.
11. All pupils, including those with special educational needs and those for whom English is an additional language, respond particularly well when the work is explained to them in an enthusiastic and lively manner, well matched to their ability, yet suitably challenging. All pupils respond more readily and positively when they are clear about the focus of their learning. This was evident in a Year 4 science lesson on animal habitats. The pupils were amazed at the size of the African snails brought in by their classroom assistant to provoke interest and aid their discussion. Because they were able to relate the task to their own understanding, they had the self-assurance to produce work of a good standard.
12. The relationships pupils have with each other and adults in school are good. There is mutual respect between teachers and pupils and this contributes to the good standard of behaviour. The school strives hard to promote a climate of co-operation amongst pupils, including the few who at times have found it harder to sustain positive relationships. Incidents of harassment and bullying amongst pupils are recorded but none was observed during the week of the inspection. Pupils know they can rely on prompt action from their teacher or supervisor if they report that someone is being unkind to them. Pupils play happily together in the playgrounds and, in good weather, enjoy the access they have to extra playing space on the fields. In the dining hall, boys and girls engage in friendly discussion and there is a good social atmosphere.
13. Some parents have concerns about the unacceptable behaviour of a small minority of pupils in school. While a few pupils find it difficult to control their behaviour at times, they are usually able to follow the clear routines and procedures now established in lessons. The vast majority of pupils respond compliantly to oral warnings about any unsatisfactory behaviour. Although some staff are more skilled than others in applying the school's good strategies for behaviour management, all teachers insist on the pupils showing good manners and kindness towards one another. As a result, by the time they reach Year 6, pupils are able to reflect on their behaviour and have a good understanding of what constitutes acceptable and unacceptable conduct within a school community. When this is not the case, the school takes appropriate

action to protect the interests of other pupils. In the year of the inspection, there were nine fixed-term exclusions involving six pupils but no pupils were permanently excluded from the school.

14. Pupils show good levels of personal responsibility. Their capacity for independence and personal study is encouraged in their after-school activities and on educational visits and promoted particularly well through timetabled class discussions on moral and social issues. During the week of the inspection, the older pupils shared their views and feelings about transferring to their secondary schools. Their responses showed just how carefully they had thought about the changes that lay ahead. Some pupils also benefit from the support of parents who promote the value of personal study at home but this is not as widespread as the school would wish it to be.
15. The more carefully planned lessons enable pupils to contribute their own thoughts, ideas and methods of working. Pupils show a good level of independent thinking when they are required to respond creatively, as, for example, they were in a Year 3 dance lesson. As they progress through the school, most pupils develop the skills needed to become independent learners. They know how to use reference books and computers to support research and independent study. Pupils respond positively to the appropriate range of opportunities they have to assist the smooth running of the school. They carry out any duties responsibly and without undue reliance on adults. In addition, they make their own contributions to the life of the community through fundraising for charitable causes.
16. The overall attendance of pupils is unsatisfactory, having deteriorated since the last inspection. Although the school has employed a wide range of strategies to combat the problem, the rate of authorised absence remains high in relation to primary schools nationally. Holidays during term time contribute to the high figure for authorised absence and disrupt the learning planned for a number of pupils. Most families succeed in getting their children to school on time and as a result, most pupils are settled and ready to learn at the start of each day. Registers are marked promptly and in accordance with statutory requirements. Given the good opportunities pupils have to learn and the good quality of teaching, those parents who condone their child's absence from lessons when it is not strictly necessary are putting their children at a disadvantage.

HOW WELL ARE PUPILS TAUGHT?

17. The quality of teaching in the lessons seen was good. A high number of pupils in the school have special needs and need skilful teaching to enable them to make satisfactory progress in relation to their standards on admission. They receive this. As a result, their learning is at least sound over time and is often good. Evidence of teaching over time as seen in pupils' work, and taking account of recent staffing changes, indicates that teaching is at least sound and often good.
18. No unsatisfactory lessons were seen. Teaching in 43 per cent of lessons was satisfactory, in 51 per cent good, three per cent very good and three per cent excellent. Teaching has improved substantially since the last inspection, when 22 per cent of the lessons seen were less than satisfactory.
19. The quality of teaching, based on the lessons seen and on supporting evidence from pupils' previous work, is satisfactory in the core subjects of English and science and good in mathematics. In other subjects, teaching is good in information and communication technology, art, history, physical education and religious education. It is satisfactory in geography. Lesson evidence was very limited in design and technology but pupils' work indicates good teaching. There was too little music seen during the inspection to evaluate teaching directly but evidence from talking to pupils and examining teachers' plans indicates satisfactory teaching.
20. Teaching is good for pupils with English as an additional language and supports their progress and their access to the full curriculum. Their needs are assessed promptly by their class

teacher and specialist staff. The support teacher uses her time well to ensure that pupils derive maximum benefit from her expertise.

21. Pupils with special educational needs are well taught both in their classrooms and in withdrawal groups, where these occur. Tasks are well matched to their abilities and to the targets outlined in their Individual Education Plans. The arrangements for grouping pupils by attainment levels in mathematics ('setting') have proved to be especially suitable for these pupils.
22. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and the weaknesses identified in the last report, especially in geography and art, have been remedied. The school gives a high priority to teaching the basic skills of literacy and numeracy and has successfully adopted the methods of the national strategies in both areas. It devotes a considerable time to literacy lessons based on the format of the National Literacy Strategy and to extended writing. However, pupils (especially at the top of the school) rarely have a sustained opportunity to work on debates, drama or their own choice of reading. The session planned for extended writing that was seen was taken up largely by discussion, so that too little time was left for writing.
23. Teachers' day-to-day planning is good. They have clear objectives for their lessons and often share these profitably with pupils. In the best lessons, these are referred to in the course of the lesson and used at the end to determine how much progress has been made. Teachers have high expectations of what pupils will achieve. Setting arrangements are used successfully overall in English and mathematics. However, work is not varied enough to cater for the full range of attainment within a set; this particularly affects the progress of the higher attainers. In science, teachers plan well to cover the factual aspects of topics but do not give enough attention to ensuring that pupils understand the investigative aspects of science or can apply their scientific knowledge to practical tasks.
24. Teachers' methods are good. They give clear explanations and engage pupils' attention. There is good attention to the specialist vocabulary for each subject. Teachers use question and answer sessions well in many lessons. This helps to develop pupils' skills in listening and speaking and often enables them to extend their answers to questions. There are high expectations of how pupils will behave and classes are managed well. Adults in the classroom provide consistent, patient guidance and this encourages good behaviour. Good relationships prevail and there is a pleasant atmosphere for learning. The weaknesses identified in classroom management by the last inspection were not in evidence.
25. Support staff make an important contribution to pupils' learning and are deployed well. They are used particularly well to ensure high levels of attention for the younger pupils in mathematics sets. They are underused at times in the introductions to literacy and numeracy sessions when they are not occupied in providing active support for teachers or pupils. Practical resources are used well and support learning in most lessons. However, the outside classrooms are cramped and sparsely furnished. Pupils in these classes have few resources easily to hand and have no immediate access to water supplies for practical work in subjects such as art or science. Time is used satisfactorily. Teachers carry out detailed audits of how they allocate their time. These ensure that all subjects are covered. However, this leads to some small pockets of time being used for very short lessons that do not enable pupils to make adequate progress.
26. Teachers assess pupils' ongoing progress satisfactorily. Oral feedback is given to pupils on their work and most teachers mark work regularly. In the best examples, marking informs pupils clearly how well they have done and what they should do next to improve. Target-setting is carried out with individuals in all classes. Pupils are aware of their targets and respond well in trying to meet them.
27. Homework is used inconsistently across the school and expectations are not communicated clearly to pupils or their parents. It usefully supports learning at times in practising basic skills such as reading or spelling. However, the amounts and quality vary considerably between classes with the result that pupils' learning is not fully supported by the work they do at home.

HOW GOOD ARE THE CURRICULAR AND OTHER OPPORTUNITIES OFFERED TO PUPILS?

28. The curriculum is broad and balanced. It provides a good range of learning opportunities for pupils. This represents an improvement since the last inspection, when there was incomplete coverage of geography, design technology and music, and the total teaching time was below average. The programme of studies includes all subjects of the National Curriculum and religious education, which is taught in accordance with the locally Agreed Syllabus. The curriculum meets statutory requirements and includes good practice in planning for sex education and education about the misuse of drugs. Personal, social and health education is planned carefully as a discrete area but is often effectively linked to other aspects of the curriculum. There are good links with the local police who have come to talk about their work and to remind pupils about keeping themselves safe from strangers, about good citizenship and the law in relation to drugs and vandalism.
29. Appropriate emphasis is given to English and mathematics, with daily sessions for literacy and numeracy. Skills in information and communication technology are taught effectively and this represents an improvement since the last inspection. Special educational needs provision and arrangements for pupils with English as an additional language are also good and contribute well to the sound progress made by these groups. The school also provides valuable booster classes for English and mathematics.
30. Overall, the allocation of time for all subjects is satisfactory. The National Literacy and Numeracy Strategies are being well implemented and the other subjects also have adequate time. Teachers plan together in year groups, using nationally recommended documents to an increasing extent. This ensures that parallel classes have equal access to what is taught.
31. The school ensures good equality of access to the curriculum for pupils and full social and educational inclusion. Boys and girls and pupils from different backgrounds work together in all subjects and are given opportunities to take part in activities at playtimes, lunchtimes and after school. A minor weakness is that pupils who have additional support in English or mathematics may miss the same parts of other lessons each week. The school hopes to review this so that they receive this extra help during mathematics or English lessons.
32. There is a satisfactory curriculum for pupils with special educational needs. Their Individual Education Plans are suitably written and show clearly the current position for each pupil. The school is currently improving the details of its provision for these pupils, especially those at the early stages of assessment. While current arrangements are sound, they lack consistency across the school; this is rightly being reviewed by the new co-ordinator.
33. The curriculum is tailored effectively to meet the needs of pupils whose first language is not English. Specialist staff liaise with the teachers to identify and cater for this group and enable them to have full access to the curriculum.
34. The provision for extra-curricular activities is good. Boys and girls play football in Years 4, 5 and 6 and school teams are very successful in local competitions. Netball and cricket are also played and older pupils are involved in athletics and swimming and compete locally. There is an art club, which meets weekly, while the music and choir groups are formed for particular performances, each year. Other activities that enrich the school curriculum include visits to museums and other places of interest in the area. Visitors have also included an author and poet during book week, theatre groups and the local librarian. All these experiences have a positive impact on pupils' understanding of the wider world. The school has good relationships with the infant school and with the local secondary schools, including staff and pupil visits and the exchange of personal and educational records and information.
35. The planned provision for pupils' personal development is good and has improved since the last inspection. Pupils are treated with care and respect. They are given regular opportunities to set their own targets for improvement. Achievements are rewarded in assemblies and by personal praise. This helps pupils to be more aware of their progress and motivates them to

learn. However, there are currently too few opportunities for pupils' work in a fuller range of subjects to be displayed in school and too few chances for them to carry out their own research and investigation in lessons.

36. Arrangements for pupils' spiritual development are satisfactory. Spiritual development is promoted through assemblies, religious education and in other subjects as the occasion arises. Assemblies are led by school staff and by visitors. They share their experience, interests and feelings with the pupils, who respond sensitively. Care is taken to establish a quiet atmosphere and pupils respond well to the music, singing and prayer and they show pleasure at the achievements of others. They also develop an understanding and respect for the beliefs of others as they study Christianity and other world religions.
37. The provision for pupils' moral development is good. They are taught to understand the difference between right and wrong and to play fairly. Adults generally provide good role models of co-operation, kindness and care. This is not always the case with lunchtime supervision but the school is running a training programme for staff to improve this. Moral issues are discussed as they arise in personal, social and health education and in religious education. Adults and pupils have agreed school rules and a system of noise level control is effective in classrooms. The school promotes good behaviour through the use of praise and encouragement and by recognising the pupils' achievements in celebration assemblies. The quality of relationships among school staff is good, which sets a good example for the pupils.
38. Good provision is made for pupils' social development and they respond well. The personal, social and health education programme provides planned opportunities for the pupils to consider a range of social issues. The pupils co-operate well together in lessons, in other activities and at playtimes. They share and take turns effectively and respect others' views in discussion. Older pupils are given a satisfactory range of responsibilities around the school. The school raises money for charities, which also helps pupils appreciate the difficulties of others. Other experiences, such as the involvement in performances, inter-school sport and visits in the local area all help to extend pupils' social awareness.
39. Provision for cultural development is good. The pupils experience a range of texts in literature and these include the work of well-known writers and poets. In art, they explore a range of media themselves and see the work of well-known artists. They listen to music from a range of traditions as well as singing and playing themselves. In history and geography, they learn about cultures in past times and of other parts of the world. Visits to places of interest and visitors to the school enrich pupils' understanding of their own and other cultures. Pupils live in a multicultural society themselves and are becoming increasingly aware of the wider world and their place within it.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL CARE FOR ITS PUPILS?

40. The school cares well for its pupils. This represents improvement since the last inspection when the support, guidance and welfare of pupils were all satisfactory. Current procedures for monitoring and supporting the pupils' behaviour and their welfare are very good and add to the school's strengths. The school continually strives to improve the level of attendance and in doing so has developed very good procedures to monitor absences. The procedures for assessing pupils' academic achievements are satisfactory for most pupils and are good for those with special educational needs. Assessments for this group clearly relate to the targets set in their Individual Educational Plans. Good arrangements are made to monitor the progress of pupils with Statements of Special Need.
41. Procedures for monitoring and promoting pupils' personal development are good. Teachers set good examples in their relationships with each other and the pupils and this supports the progress made by pupils in their personal and social development. The headteacher, for example, makes time to sit and talk to the pupils in the dinner hall. A strong emphasis is placed on furthering pupils' personal and social skills and helping them think through the choices they make. Teachers promote the pupils' self-esteem by making them aware and proud of their individual achievements. Individual and team success are aimed for and then

celebrated in assemblies. Pupils are encouraged to share their thoughts and focus on their prospects through stories, discussion and drama. Good records of pupils' personal achievements and opportunities in lessons for pupils to express their opinions contribute to the knowledge teachers have about the pupils they teach. They make good use of the knowledge gained to provide evaluative comment to parents on their children's personal progress at consultation evenings. Parents appreciate this.

42. The school is effective in identifying pupils with learning difficulties soon after entry to the school and the Code of Practice¹ for special educational needs is followed carefully. There is effective care for the pupils with English as an additional language. The deputy headteacher and specialist staff liaise well in identifying and supporting the language and cultural needs of this group.
43. There are good procedures for monitoring and promoting good behaviour in school. The rules and boundaries within which pupils are expected to operate have been made sufficiently clear to them. When pupils chatter too much, or became over-excited, teachers have effective ways of calming them down. When pupils behave unacceptably they are immediately told that their behaviour is unwelcome and a disappointment to others. In most cases, this successfully prevents the unacceptable behaviour of one pupil from impinging upon the learning of others. Records are kept of all incidents of unacceptable behaviour and these are used well by the headteacher in her discussions with parents. Because they are involved in any concerns about their children's behaviour at an early stage, parents are usually willing to support the school's practice and views on discipline. The home/school agreement reminds all parents of the school's policy and makes clear the procedures for promoting good behaviour.
44. Teachers encourage pupils to care for each other and show particular kindness and tolerance to those who may need help. In this respect, pupils are developing a good sense of equality and fairness in their dealings with each other. All pupils look forward to their playtimes and the chance to play football, cricket or quieter games with their friends. Teachers and supervisors reinforce the rule that unkind behaviour towards anyone is neither expected nor tolerated.
45. Registers are marked in accordance with statutory requirements and accurately reflect all reasons for absence. Telephoned and written reminders plus one-to-one discussions between parents and staff have effectively reduced the number of unauthorised absences. However, the authorised absence figure remains too high. The school has yet to change the relaxed attitude some parents have towards the importance of their children's regular attendance at school. Too little effort is made by a significant minority of parents to improve the attendance of their children.
46. Procedures for promoting pupils' well-being and health and safety are very good. Procedures for child protection are in place and up-to-date. All staff maintain a high degree of sensitivity to the needs of the individual when dealing with issues of child protection. Close liaison is maintained with the parents of pupils with specific medical conditions to ensure that the school meets their children's needs. Pupils are given good information to raise their awareness of how sensibly to care for and look after their bodies. There are carefully developed programmes of sex education and aspects of drugs education taught in science and in health education lessons across the school. Parents trust the school to provide sensitive and supportive teaching of the issues involved.
47. Procedures for administering first aid are very good. Staff keep a detailed and updated record of all injuries and accidents in school and operate well-designed systems to keep the parents fully informed. There are sufficient numbers of staff holding the customarily recognised full certification for administering first aid to both pupils and adults. This ensures that pupils have access to first aid from trained personnel throughout the school day. The procedures for assessing the condition of the school site and buildings and any areas of risk are thorough and

¹ Code of Practice – this gives practical advice to schools and local education authorities about their responsibilities and tasks to ensure that pupils who have special educational needs receive the most appropriate help to further their learning and personal development. This is a statutory duty under the 1993 Education Act.

well documented. There are good procedures to ensure work is attended to at the earliest possible opportunity. Fire evacuation procedures are particularly well planned and practised. There were no health and safety issues identified in the last inspection report that have not been satisfactorily addressed.

48. Procedures for assessing pupils' attainment and progress are satisfactory although there are some weaknesses in the foundation subjects. This is similar to the last inspection. In English, mathematics and science, pupils' progress is tracked through the use of standardised and school-devised tests and the information gained is used effectively to guide curricular planning. In mathematics, for example, pupils are divided into separate classes for teaching purposes depending on their ability. As a result, teachers are able to ensure that most pupils make good progress with their learning at a level appropriate for them. In English, regular checks are made each term on writing and reading and this information is then used to guide teachers with the work that they set for pupils in lessons. In science, teachers have begun to set agreed tasks for pupils to decide how much progress they are making. In religious education, teachers make use of the assessment provision in the locally Agreed Syllabus to find out how well pupils have mastered each section of study. In other subjects of the curriculum there are no formal or agreed procedures in place for assessing the level of progress that pupils make with their learning.
49. Procedures for monitoring and supporting pupils' academic progress are satisfactory. Teachers mark pupils' work regularly but the quality of marking is variable. Where it is as its best, as in Year 6 in mathematics, teachers make positive and constructive comments that help pupils to increase their learning. Teachers are moving towards an improved approach of regular monitoring of pupils' work so that, by consistently looking at what pupils can and cannot do, teachers are placing more focus on what has to be done to move pupils on from one level to the next. To help in this approach in subjects other than English, mathematics and science, teachers assess one piece of work from each pupil and place it in individual portfolios to provide an ongoing record of progress made.

HOW WELL DOES THE SCHOOL WORK IN PARTNERSHIP WITH PARENTS?

50. At the time of the last inspection, there was a satisfactory partnership between the school and its parents and, for the most part, this has been maintained. Parents are satisfied with the work of the school. Although they expressed concerns about some aspects, most parents believe the school expects their children to work hard and achieve their best. However, despite the sound efforts made by the school, parents show a reticence to contribute wholeheartedly to their children's learning in school and at home and this is an unsatisfactory situation.
51. The parents' meeting with the inspectors and the parents' questionnaires provided mixed messages of support for the school but it was always the positive comments that were echoed by the parents interviewed during the week of the inspection. The view most parents hold is that their children like school and make good progress while they are there. However, a significant minority of those responding to the questionnaire expressed concern about the standard of pupils' behaviour, the organised activities outside lessons and the leadership and management of the school. The inspection team found that although, predictably, there is room for improvement in all these areas, the provision for these aspects is good. A number of parents also had concerns about the use of homework. In this respect, the inspection evidence supports their unease. The school remains committed to encouraging the pupils' personal study but homework is not used effectively for this purpose, or for improving the partnership with parents. This is not in keeping with the school's commitment to raise standards even further.
52. The quality of information provided for parents, particularly about their children's progress, is generally satisfactory. Nevertheless, some parents, especially of younger pupils, would like to know more about the school and about how their children's education will develop in this key stage. The school sends a sufficient amount of written information home and this is well

received by parents. Those visiting the school have good access to parents' information boards and the advice of helpful staff. Parents cite consultation evenings and annual reports as the main ways in which they are kept informed about their children's progress and learning. However, despite the school's intention to have an 'open door' policy, parents seldom approach teachers unless there is a particular issue or concern they need to address. The lack of an active parents' association means that parents have rather limited opportunities to communicate informally with teachers and within the school community. In this respect, the school has yet to build upon the early links made with parents prior to pupils' transfer from the infant to the junior stage.

53. The end-of-year reports on pupils' progress meet requirements. The best examples include useful indicators to parents on what their child needs to do to improve, particularly in English and mathematics. Although this helps parents understand the targets their children need to focus on, the reports do not make clear how parents might help their child achieve them. Parents of pupils with special educational needs are properly involved in the school's procedures of reviewing their targets. This helps them understand the progress their children make.
54. The school brochure provides parents with a satisfactory general introduction to the school and adequate information about the curriculum. The governors' annual report has additional information about the work of the school but provides little insight into the part the governors play in raising standards, monitoring the progress pupils make or shaping the direction of the school. By failing to include an update on the action plan, governors miss an opportunity of illustrating to parents the good progress made by the school since its last inspection. Other than that, their report provides parents with all the information statutorily required.
55. The school's links with parents are satisfactory. Parents are happy to be drawn into activities they have skills in, such as dressing their children in a particular themed costume or helping to supervise children on school trips. Teachers commend the progress of the dozen or so parents involved in the family learning projects organised by the local education authority and promoted in school. Parents attending these receive considerable support in helping to improve both their own and their children's literacy and information technology skills. Parent/teacher consultation evenings are well attended and parents give enthusiastic support to all events at which their children can perform, such as school concerts and sports days. They help teachers maintain the good standard of pupil behaviour by praising their children when they bring home news about their achievements and awards. By showing an interest in these occasions, parents promote the feeling amongst their children that their schoolwork is valued, which has a positive impact on the pupils' attitudes to their learning.
56. Parents are keen to see their children succeed but relatively few make the best use of all the opportunities they have to make a truly significant impact upon their children's learning at school. Few, for example, are willing to commit themselves to helping in classes on a regular basis or to organising fundraising or social events to enhance life in school and in the community. Although teachers would very much like to enlist and engage the support of all parents in tackling and improving the low rate of pupil attendance, they have yet to identify an effective way of doing this. Parents view homework as providing a useful link between the pupils' learning at home and at school. However, while many are happy to support the after-school activities such as sport fixtures, not all parents find reading with their children an experience to enjoy regularly or to plan for. The potential of parents is largely untapped in this respect.

HOW WELL IS THE SCHOOL LED AND MANAGED?

57. Since the last inspection, the school has moved forward well under the good leadership of the headteacher, who is well respected by the staff and pupils. Improvements have been secured in the standards achieved by pupils in their work and behaviour and in the quality of teaching provided. In recent months, however, these improvements have been affected by the school's difficulties in recruiting sufficient high quality staff to fill vacancies and to cover for staff

absence. These staffing problems are currently having a negative effect on the school's capacity for continuing improvement.

58. The headteacher has worked energetically and successfully to establish a secure atmosphere and pleasant environment for learning. The staff work well as a team under her leadership. Their agreed aims and values inform the school's policies and actions and are having a positive impact on raising standards. The headteacher is supported well by an able and committed deputy and, increasingly, by the staff who are given appropriate training and support in developing their areas of responsibility. Subject leaders are in place for most areas. Staff have carried out systematic monitoring of lessons in English and mathematics and in areas that have been recent priorities in the school. This has led to improvements in teaching and learning. Pupils' results in test and other assessments are evaluated well and the information gained is used to establish targets and identify initiatives for improvement. These are focused well on the areas of greatest need. To date, subject leaders have not all had an opportunity to monitor their areas of responsibility at first hand in the classroom but there is now a well-considered timetable for monitoring teachers' planning and assessments and for checking pupils' work.
59. The co-ordinator for special educational needs is new in post and has already made a good start in updating and improving the quality of the special educational needs provision. The register for special educational needs is professionally maintained and is of a good standard. A policy is in place and covers all the main aspects of care for pupils with special educational needs. It is to be reviewed and updated shortly by the recently appointed co-ordinator. The deputy headteacher provides sound co-ordination of the arrangements to support pupils whose first language is not English or who come to the school from other cultures. She liaises well with class teachers and specialist language staff in this role.
60. The governing body consists of a mix of experienced and inexperienced governors. It has been successful in recruiting governors to most vacancies. There is an appropriate committee structure and governors are supportive of the school. The chair of governors is fairly new to the post. He communicates regularly with the headteacher and has a clear vision for how the governing body needs to develop as governors gain experience. Governors satisfactorily question what the school does. They have very recently established a promising system of links with classes and with subject co-ordinators which should enable them to be better informed about how the school works in practice. Governors ensure that statutory requirements are met satisfactorily. At present, the governing body tends to rely on the headteacher and staff to advise on the direction the school should take. This is appropriate for this stage in its development and all parties are committed to improving the role of the governors in strategic planning as they become more experienced.
61. The school's written development plans successfully communicate its priorities. Their quality has improved since the last inspection and they indicate both short-term initiatives and the longer-term vision. Action plans are produced for all subjects of the curriculum, and aspects of the school such as the premises and governing body development are included appropriately.
62. The school has established good procedures for financial planning and management. Finances are effectively linked to the school improvement plan. Financial controls are good and ensure that any specific grants are used for the designated purpose. Governors monitor the budget carefully through regular and detailed information provided by the headteacher and the finance officer. The governing body and the headteacher seek to gain best value in purchasing goods and services; they questioning sensibly what the school does and assess how well it performs. The school achieves good value for money in the standards achieved by its pupils and the quality of education it offers them. The administration of the school's work is supported by good use of information technology.
63. There are sufficient suitably qualified staff in the school, although recruitment difficulties are causing concern for the future. The arrangements for inducting new staff are good. Performance management arrangements are good and well on course to meet national requirements. A strength of the school's professional development arrangements is the commitment to high quality training. Staff are enabled to undertake courses aligned to their own priorities and to the school's development plans. Office staff are efficient and give

valuable administrative support. The site staff, led by the caretaker, clean and maintain the building well; their efficiency contributes to the smooth running of the school and to a pleasant environment for staff and pupils.

64. The accommodation is of adequate size for the number of pupils on the roll. It benefits from a large assembly hall and useful lobby areas. Good use has been made of the available space to provide a library, information technology suite and art and craft room. However, three classes are housed in hatted classrooms on the school field that are cramped, poorly furnished and under-resourced. They have no hot water supplies and only one has toilet facilities. This places constraints on the pupils and teachers who work there. The inspection took place during hot weather and classrooms, both in the main building and outside, could not be adequately ventilated. The very small windows in the classrooms in the main building are poor and pupils' welfare suffers as a result. Many of the lessons seen were less successful than they might have been because pupils and teachers struggled to cope with these conditions.
65. The outdoor site is spacious and the hard-surfaced playground has been relaid since the last inspection and is now in a satisfactory condition. The headteacher has worked hard to improve the starkness of the landscape and to provide shade and interest in the outdoor area for pupils. For example, numerous trees have been planted and outdoor seating provided. However, the school's efforts have been thwarted by regular acts of vandalism that have destroyed these features and damaged the school building. In spite of considerable expenditure on security fencing, vandalism and damage continue.
66. Overall, the practical resources for learning are satisfactory. Resources are good in the information technology suite, although this has been achieved at the expense of computers in individual classrooms. The library is a useful resource and books are in good condition. However, stocks of reference books are low. There are too few fiction books with appropriate levels of content for the older pupils who still need simpler texts and too few resources to support the development of pupils' speaking skills. Some of the gymnastic equipment in the hall is in need of refurbishment or replacement.

WHAT SHOULD THE SCHOOL DO TO IMPROVE FURTHER?

67. To build on the school's strengths and raise standards further, the headteacher, staff and the governing body should take the following action.

- Raise standards in the core subjects of English, mathematics and science by:
 - ensuring that, in English, pupils take part in structured activities that will develop their speaking skills, that they have opportunities to read and write for sustained periods as appropriate to their level of skills and that they receive adult guidance as necessary in their choice of reading;
 - developing pupils' rapid mental recall of number and ensuring that activities in mathematics lessons challenge the most capable pupils;
 - improving pupils' understanding of scientific enquiry as planned to support the application of their factual knowledge to practical and investigative situations.
(paragraphs 1 – 6, 22 - 23, 68 - 93)
- Continue the rigorous efforts to improve attendance in partnership with parents and pupils.
(paragraphs 16, 45)
- Improve the dialogue and partnership with parents by:
 - encouraging parents to take a more active role in supporting their children's learning;
 - ensuring that parents are clear about the school's expectations for homework and that this is provided in line with an agreed policy;
 - building on the arrangements for transition from pupils' infant schools to the junior school so that parents are better informed about their children's continuing education;
 - ensuring that parents feel comfortable about approaching members of staff with any concerns.
(paragraphs 27, 34, 50 - 56)

Other issues that should be considered by the school:

- ensuring that the planned programme of governing body development takes place to enable governors to play a fuller part in the management of the school;
(paragraphs 60 - 61)
- the lack of agreed assessment procedures in the foundation subjects;
(paragraphs 48, 106, 110, 118, 124)
- taking all opportunities to improve the quality of the accommodation, especially in relation to the hatted classrooms and the ventilation problems in the main school;
(paragraph 64)
- reviewing ways to improve the grounds and external environment for pupils.
(paragraph 65)

PART C: SCHOOL DATA AND INDICATORS

Summary of the sources of evidence for the inspection

Number of lessons observed	44
Number of discussions with staff, governors, other adults and pupils	33

Summary of teaching observed during the inspection

Excellent	Very good	Good	Satisfactory	Unsatisfactory	Poor	Very Poor
3	3	51	43	0	0	0

The table gives the percentage of teaching observed in each of the seven categories used to make judgements about lessons.

Information about the school's pupils

Pupils on the school's roll

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils on the school's roll (FTE for part-time pupils)	218
Number of full-time pupils known to be eligible for free school meals	62

Special educational needs

	Y3 – Y6
Number of pupils with statements of special educational needs	3
Number of pupils on the school's special educational needs register	72

English as an additional language

	No of pupils
Number of pupils with English as an additional language	48

Pupil mobility in the last school year

	No of pupils
Pupils who joined the school other than at the usual time of first admission	4
Pupils who left the school other than at the usual time of leaving	18

Attendance

Authorised absence

	%
School data	6.7
National comparative data	4.3

Unauthorised absence

	%
School data	0.1
National comparative data	0.3

Both tables give the percentage of half days (sessions) missed through absence for the latest complete reporting year.

Attainment at the end of Key Stage 2

Number of registered pupils in final year of Key Stage 2 for the latest reporting year	Year	Boys	Girls	Total
	2000	18	24	42

National Curriculum Test/Task Results		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	12	13	17
	Girls	18	15	21
	Total	30	28	38
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	71 (64)	67 (60)	90 (80)
	National	75 (70)	72 (69)	85 (78)

Teachers' Assessments		English	Mathematics	Science
Numbers of pupils at NC level 4 and above	Boys	10	13	13
	Girls	17	15	16
	Total	27	28	29
Percentage of pupils at NC level 4 or above	School	64 (52)	67 (68)	69 (70)
	National	70 (68)	72 (69)	79 (75)

Percentages in brackets refer to the year before the latest reporting year.

Ethnic background of pupils

	No of pupils
Black – Caribbean heritage	15
Black – African heritage	4
Black – other	4
Indian	6
Pakistani	7
Bangladeshi	11
Chinese	0
White	144
Any other minority ethnic group	27

This table refers to pupils of compulsory school age only. It includes information volunteered to the school by parents and does not cover all pupils.

Exclusions in the last school year

	Fixed period	Permanent
Black – Caribbean heritage	1	0
Black – African heritage	0	0
Black – other	0	0
Indian	0	0
Pakistani	0	0
Bangladeshi	0	0
Chinese	0	0
White	4	0
Other minority ethnic groups	0	0

This table gives the number of exclusions of pupils of compulsory school age, which may be different from the number of pupils excluded.

Teachers and classes

Qualified teachers and classes: Y3– Y6

Total number of qualified teachers (FTE)	10.2
Number of pupils per qualified teacher	21.4
Average class size	27

Education support staff: Y3 – Y6

Total number of education support staff	7
Total aggregate hours worked per week	155

FTE means full-time equivalent.

Financial information

Financial year	2000 - 2001
	£
Total income	501,624
Total expenditure	518,508
Expenditure per pupil	2,389
Balance brought forward from previous year	28,533
Balance carried forward to next year	11,649

Results of the survey of parents and carers

Questionnaire return rate

Number of questionnaires sent out	218
Number of questionnaires returned	45

Percentage of responses in each category

	Strongly agree	Tend to agree	Tend to disagree	Strongly disagree	Don't know
My child likes school.	38	44	9	7	2
My child is making good progress in school.	47	42	7	4	0
Behaviour in the school is good.	27	42	9	13	9
My child gets the right amount of work to do at home.	22	47	20	9	2
The teaching is good.	33	51	7	2	7
I am kept well informed about how my child is getting on.	33	44	9	11	2
I would feel comfortable about approaching the school with questions or a problem.	47	36	9	9	0
The school expects my child to work hard and achieve his or her best.	47	49	2	0	2
The school works closely with parents.	22	51	13	9	4
The school is well led and managed.	27	42	13	11	7
The school is helping my child become mature and responsible.	27	53	11	4	4
The school provides an interesting range of activities outside lessons.	27	42	18	2	11

Figures may not total 100% owing to rounding.

PART D: THE STANDARDS AND QUALITY OF TEACHING IN AREAS OF THE CURRICULUM, SUBJECTS AND COURSES

ENGLISH

68. The school has maintained overall standards in pupils' work since the last inspection and has considerably improved its test results. In the 2000 National Curriculum tests for 11-year-olds, the proportion of pupils reaching the expected Level 4 was just below the national average but the proportion achieving a higher level was close to the national average. When results are compared with those of pupils from schools in similar areas, attainment was well above average. This represents a sustained improvement since 1998. The unconfirmed results for the 2001 tests show a slight improvement in the proportion of pupils achieving Level 4 but a drop in the number reaching Level 5. The group of pupils currently in Year 6 contains a higher number with special needs than last year. Over the past few years, while the standards achieved by pupils as seven-year-olds have improved, overall levels of attainment on admission to the school are below average and are especially weak in writing.
69. Inspection findings are that attainment by Year 6 is below average. Pupils' standard of speaking at the end of the key stage is a little below average, although they listen well. Pupils enter the school with below average levels of attainment in speaking but most listen carefully. They make sound progress in developing their skills in speaking and listening in all areas of the curriculum. Throughout the school, pupils listen well to teachers and to each other in whole class and group sessions and in assemblies. Most make appropriate responses to show that they have listened carefully and understand the content of adult talk and of text which is read to them. Most pupils are confident to speak, though some are hesitant and have difficulty in sentence construction and using appropriate vocabulary. Most are keen to answer questions and contribute to discussion. For example, the more able pupils in Year 6 discussed the ethical questions raised by the contents of a newspaper article. Pupils explained why they thought particular information should or should not be published and contributed some thoughtful and knowledgeable views. Those who were less able in another Year 6 lesson, found it more difficult to explain the differences between fact and opinion and were learning the meaning of some words, for example, 'enthusiast'. In several lessons, pupils discussed a topic and shared their knowledge effectively with others in response to teachers' prompts and questions. Many pupils also read their work confidently. A good example occurred in Year 5, when pupils read aloud poems they had composed and their teacher's supportive comments helped them to appreciate the need for consistency in rhyme and rhythm and in projecting their voices for others to hear well. Most pupils are able to talk briefly about their work to visitors; some, however, are still quite hesitant in doing so. The pupils have few opportunities for formal speaking and no examples were seen of debates, drama or role play.
70. Overall, in reading, pupils' attainment is below the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 2 as a relatively small proportion of pupils achieve higher levels of skill. Pupils enter the school with a level of attainment which is below the national expectation and many need regular individual support in reading. The school uses a published reading scheme to support pupils' learning and pupils often select their own books within a level. All pupils have a daily experience of reading a text together as a class as part of the literacy hour. However, sometimes slower readers and those at the back of a large class group have problems in reading the text and they are not always effectively supported. All pupils read as a member of a smaller group about twice a week but have fewer opportunities to practise reading individually. Some pupils read regularly at home but many do not.
71. Year 6 pupils read together from the local newspaper. They correctly identify lead stories and practise distinguishing fact from opinion. The able pupils have developed successful strategies for deducing the meaning of new words, for example, 'hypertension', but the less able find the text and format of a newspaper demanding to read. By the age of eleven, in this year group, the most able pupils are reading an appropriate text with comprehension, expression and enthusiasm. They are beginning to scan the text and can find books in the library. However, they have insufficient understanding of different genres, authors and styles of writing and they have too few opportunities to read material of their choice. Pupils of

average attainment are sometimes able to read appropriate fiction and information accurately but they are sometimes hesitant readers. Many need more practice to develop accuracy, fluency and expression. They use contextual and phonic cues to help them decipher new words and use dictionaries with increasing speed. They are not yet able to scan the text to find information quickly. The less able pupils can read simple texts accurately and most have positive attitudes to reading, though they need books with more suitable content to reflect their age and interests. Most pupils know how to locate books in the library using a simple classification system.

72. Reading improves as pupils move up the school and those of high levels of attainment and some of middle ability, read to a standard in line with national expectations. There are, however, few examples of above average reading with liveliness of expression, and a comparatively large number of pupils have below average skills and are hesitant readers. Throughout the school, pupils have too few opportunities and time to read their own choice of books as individuals. Some pupils also need more guidance in their choice of books and greater encouragement to read at home.
73. Attainment in writing is below the national expectation by the end of Key Stage 2. Pupils write for a range of purposes, including letters, accounts of events, stories and information. They are able to record their work in all areas of the curriculum and sometimes the quality of writing is better in other subjects, such as science, than in English lessons. In most daily literacy sessions, pupils do some writing, including composing stories, poetry, factual writing, grammar exercises and answers to comprehension questions. Handwriting is taught and appropriate attention is paid to spelling and grammar.
74. By Year 6, able and average pupils become increasingly accurate in their use of apostrophes, plurals and paragraphs. The most able are writing longer pieces with a good selection of words, for example, a thriller story, and their handwriting is good. The creative writing of most pupils has a simple theme and is quite short, perhaps due to time constraints. Some lower attainers do not complete work appropriately in the time available and some have difficulty with grammar and have poorly formed handwriting, which inhibits their communication.
75. Progress through the year groups is satisfactory in relation to the pupils' low attainment in writing in Year 3. Pupils' writing gradually increases in length and complexity. Many can use dictionaries appropriately and the regular teaching of spelling and grammar helps them to develop their skills. The handwriting of some is good but others need more practice. Pupils' work is not often displayed in classes for others to read and this limits the purpose of their writing at times. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language, make satisfactory progress, particularly when working with a learning assistant. Pupils use their literacy skills appropriately across the curriculum.
76. Pupils' response in lessons is almost always good. They listen well to the teacher in whole class sessions and only occasionally lose interest if the input is over-long. They settle quickly to activities, co-operate well in groups and concentrate well to try to complete work in the time available. They respond to questions and try to contribute appropriately in discussions and they respect others' views. Most pupils have positive attitudes to reading in school and enjoy using the library when there is an opportunity to do so.
77. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory, with some good teaching in some classes. All teachers have secure subject knowledge and use the National Literacy Strategy to plan for pupils' learning. Some teachers are more successful than others in planning for groups of pupils with varying abilities who learn at different rates. The good teaching is characterised by secure subject knowledge and well-planned lessons, which take account of pupils' stage of development, interests and experience. There is good organisation and management of group work and of adult input, which extends pupils' ideas effectively and focuses well on the specific content. Work often has a real purpose and resources are well organised. This helps pupils to be well motivated and purposeful in their work. Marking is regular and teachers quite often make comments in books, though these are usually praise and do not always include how the work can be developed.

78. Where teaching is less successful, the work is insufficiently planned to cater for the varying attainment groups. Resources are not well planned for reading and some pupils do not get the support they need to complete the work appropriately or to their satisfaction. In some classes, there is little pupil work displayed and valued to promote writing as a form of communication to others. In most classes, due to timetable constraints, teachers give insufficient time for pupils to read individually or to guide their choice of books. Sometimes there is insufficient time to complete writing and this too has a negative impact on learning.
79. The curriculum for English is based on the National Literacy Strategy and has improved since the last inspection. The school has a clear policy and four-year scheme of work and uses a published scheme to support this. All teachers have received training and support in using the literacy strategy. Regular assessments are made of pupils' attainment in reading and writing and are more effective than at the time of the last inspection. The co-ordinator has analysed the results of assessments and national tests and observed teaching in order to help staff identify strengths and weaknesses in their teaching of English. Some staff make insufficient use of this data in planning for the full range of attainment in the class. Pupils' work is also checked by the co-ordinator and appropriate records are kept. The school organises useful extra withdrawal help for some pupils and literacy booster classes are held.
80. The library is well organised and classes have their own book areas. However, there are too few factual and reference books for general reading and there are too few readily accessible fiction books, particularly those with mature content for slower readers. There are few practical resources to support drama or to promote speaking and listening. Pupils' work in English is extended by visiting authors and poets during book week and by visits from theatre groups. These experiences enrich the English curriculum.

MATHEMATICS

81. Standards are below average by the time that pupils are 11 years of age, as at the time of the last inspection. The national test results for the last four years, including the year 2000, indicate a steady improvement in standards that is broadly in line with the national trend. Results for 2000 show that pupils' attainment was below the national average but above the average for schools in similar areas. Unconfirmed results from this year's national tests indicate an improvement on last year's figures.
82. By the time pupils are in Year 3, they are beginning to gain a basic understanding of fractional number. Higher attaining pupils know how to work out alternative methods for deciding on fractional parts of a whole. Although most pupils are aware of the most common fractional parts, most continue to have difficulty working these out in practical situations. By Year 4, pupils learn how to identify factors of relatively simple numbers but they do not find this easy to achieve. They know that division is the opposite operation of multiplication and higher attaining pupils work out their own strategies for solving written problems involving division. In Year 5, pupils increase their knowledge and understanding of the relationship between decimals and fractions and know how to use a calculator correctly to check their answers. In Year 6, pupils learn to interpret timetables with a reasonable degree of accuracy but they do not find the multiplication of decimal numbers easy. The main reasons why pupils' attainment is below average by Year 6 are the slowness of their mental recall and their limited ability to apply their understanding of mathematics to practical and problem-solving situations.
83. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall. Teachers have a good basic knowledge of mathematics and make regular use of subject-specific terms. As a result, pupils' knowledge and understanding of mathematical vocabulary is extended. Teachers use the National Numeracy Strategy successfully to enhance pupils' learning. As with a lesson seen in Year 6 on the recognition and use of standard units of measurement, teachers review progress often and use the session at the end to help pupils consolidate their learning. However, because many pupils continue to have difficulties with quick mental recall of number combinations, the emphasis on this part of lessons is not yet sufficient to raise associated skills to a competent level.

84. In planning, teachers set out clear learning intentions in lesson plans and on the board. As a result, pupils know exactly what they are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson and this has a positive effect on the quality of learning achieved. Pupils are divided into classes according to their ability in mathematics and this is effective in ensuring that all pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress with their learning. However, although the tasks set are at broadly appropriate levels for pupils within each class, it is not varied enough to cater for the full range of attainment of the pupils. When this happens, the progress of higher attaining pupils within that class is sometimes restricted.
85. Most teachers have a good level of expectation of how pupils should behave and work and this ensures that the atmosphere within their rooms supports effective learning. Where teachers' expectations of pupils are very high, as in a Year 5 lesson on methods of addition and subtraction, the pace of the lesson is fast. Pupils are expected to work hard and respond quickly and efficiently to the tasks set.
86. Teachers use an effective range of methods that make sure that pupils concentrate on their work. They are firm and fair in their relationships with pupils and this helps to ensure that lessons progress in a steady and ordered way. In some of the best lessons, teachers set pupils limited amounts of time to complete various tasks. As a result, pupils rise to the challenge, find their mathematics exciting and are keen to learn.
87. The quality of assessment is good overall and improved since the last inspection. Teachers mark work regularly and generally make positive comments to pupils both verbally and in writing. The quality of marking is variable in terms of the use it is to pupils. Where it is particularly good, as in Year 6, for example, teachers explain to pupils clearly how they can improve their work or a particular process of computation. Records of pupils' progress are regularly updated and keep teachers informed as to how well each pupil is achieving. As a result of regular assessment, teachers are aware of the need to develop particular aspects of the subject, for example, swifter and more efficient computation.
88. The co-ordinator for this subject has a very good understanding of her role and the targets set for improvement are realistic. She supports teachers effectively by monitoring both teaching and planning and provides positive feedback to them as well as giving demonstration lessons on occasions. This enhances the quality of teaching of mathematics throughout the school. Teachers make appropriate use of numeracy to support learning in other areas of the curriculum, such as number lines in a Year 4 study of the Tudors, and line graphs in geography in Year 5, where pupils compare temperature differences between London and Bangalore.

SCIENCE

89. The school's results in the National Curriculum tests for its 11-year-olds in recent years have shown a steady improvement. They have moved from well below the national average in 1997 to average in 2000. Compared with schools in similar areas in 2000, results were well above average. Unconfirmed results for 2001 show yet another increase in the proportion of pupils who achieve the national expectation (Level 4) but a drop in the percentage reaching the higher Level 5. The decrease at Level 5 is mainly owing to a higher number of pupils with special educational needs in the current Year 6 classes. Inspection findings show that, while pupils' coverage of the factual elements of the curriculum is good and supports their performance in tests well, they are considerably less secure in their understanding of scientific enquiry. As a result, their overall attainment is below average. In spite of this, their progress over time is satisfactory in relation to their relatively low levels of attainment on entry to the key stage in Year 3 and to the high proportion of special educational needs identified. This satisfactory progress has been maintained since the time of the last inspection.
90. Pupils in Year 3 are learning about how the earth's orbit determines day and night. They understand that the earth is in darkness when it rotates away from the sun and draw diagrams to show this. Their books show satisfactory coverage of the relevant curriculum. There is good attention to experimental work and to how findings are recorded in text and tables. In Year 4, pupils demonstrate an above average understanding of animal classification and food

chains. As a result of very good teaching, they used correct terminology such as 'herbivore', 'predator' and 'producer' to describe elements of the food chains they studied. Their oral contributions to the lesson seen were of a high standard for their age. Pupils in Year 5 have made a recent study of the human body and recall functions such as movement and reproduction. They name the major bones and organs satisfactorily. Most are beginning to be able to construct a fair test, as seen when they compared the length of their bones in relation to their height. However, a significant minority do not yet understand how to control variables, such as ensuring that skull measurements in different people are taken from the same place on the head.

91. Pupils in Year 6 often show a sound knowledge of scientific facts and terms. For example, in lessons about dissolving, they defined evaporation and condensation correctly. However, their ability to set up investigations independently and to draw conclusions and generalisations from their work varies considerably and is below average. In one of the classes, pupils needed considerable help from their teacher to control the factors in their dissolving experiment, with several groups changing more than one variable at times. Many find it difficult to form relevant questions or to record their work systematically. They often do not listen carefully enough to the teachers' questions or express themselves well orally. The work they have done previously in the year shows good coverage of the programmes of study. However, the content and findings are often copied and identical in pupils' books. They do not demonstrate individual levels of understanding of the topics covered. Pupils' work in science supports, and is supported by, their achievements in literacy. Pupils gain regular practice in writing their work in an appropriate format. Work is also supported by activities in information and communication technology, such as that seen in Years 5 and 6, where pupils have used temperature and light sensors to monitor experiments and produced computerised graphs of their results.
92. Teaching and learning are satisfactory overall. Very good teaching in Year 4 was characterised by a clear systematic structure, good pace and intense enthusiasm by the teacher that motivated and stimulated the class to learn and to share ideas. In general, teachers' subject knowledge is secure, they have clear objectives for their lessons and they explain tasks well. All teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and create a pleasant, purposeful atmosphere in lessons. Pupils respond well to this by co-operating well with their teachers and making good use of their time. Teachers deal effectively with the needs of pupils who have special learning requirements and ensure that those with English as an additional language understand what they are doing. They insist on high standards of presentation in the work that appears in pupils' books but, too often, this is identical for all pupils and does not reflect how each pupil has coped with the lessons. While teachers plan well to cover the relevant factual topics, more emphasis is needed on developing enquiry methods and in pupils' ability to record their own work. Pupils' response to lessons is sound in most cases. They are interested in their work and comply with their teachers' requests.
93. The co-ordinator manages the subject satisfactorily. She is relatively inexperienced and has sensibly taken time this year to extend her own capabilities and has a sound grasp of areas for further development. Working with her colleagues, she has improved the overall planning and assessment procedures that were areas for development at the time of the last inspection. She receives good support from the headteacher in her work and has recently established useful links with a representative from the governing body to share information about the subject with the governors in general. Levels of practical resources are generally satisfactory in the main school. However, the poor accommodation provided in the hatted classrooms places constraints on the activities that can be planned, as space is very limited and there are no sinks or water supplies.

ART AND DESIGN

94. The standards attained by 11-year-olds are in line with what is expected nationally and pupils make satisfactory progress in their lessons. Standards are now more even across the school than at the time of the last inspection and, to that extent, have improved. Pupils explore and communicate ideas through an appropriate range of visual material and show progress in the way their skills develop. They adapt and improve their work. Their knowledge and

understanding of the work of famous artists and of craftspeople is limited. The school has placed an emphasis recently on developing pupils' skills in designing and making three-dimensional images and this has been successful. During the inspection, good quality three-dimensional work was seen in all year groups. This was illustrated well by a display of paper sculpture in the main reception area which included work from all age groups and showed how pupils' skills in design, execution, evaluation and recording develop systematically as they move through the school.

95. Pupils in Year 3 extend their skills and techniques in observational drawings. They showed progress in a lesson where they studied and copied mammals and birds from taxidermists' models or from photographs. The teacher had given them good practice in testing the results they would obtain from different drawing pencils at the outset and they used these well to convey texture and shading. They looked carefully at their results and improved them with practice. In Year 4, pupils investigated a range of fabrics for a fish collage and joined these with stitching. They referred to their initial sketchbook designs well and considered colour imaginatively. Pupils in Year 5 have recently explored printing techniques using their topic of Greek history as a starting point and have built up prints in three colours. Both classes in Year 6 showed a successful accumulation of their skills with three-dimensional work when completing a paper and acrylic human sculpture. These demonstrated good attention to scale and imaginative positioning of the limbs and torso, for example, to represent a dancer or sports person.
96. Teaching and learning are good in the range of work that is covered and the weaknesses in the consistency of provision identified by the last inspection have been remedied. Teachers plan interesting and varied activities that reflect the requirements of the curriculum well in most aspects. However, there is relatively little attention to introducing pupils to famous artists and to the work of craftspeople outside the school; as a result, pupils' knowledge of this aspect of the curriculum is limited. Teachers have clear objectives for their lessons and build progressively on the pupils' levels of skill, knowledge and understanding. A good example of this was seen in Year 3 where the teacher, who was new to the class, checked the pupils' sketchbooks carefully to establish how much they had experimented with different drawing pencils prior to the lesson. Teachers create a pleasant atmosphere in lessons and manage pupils' behaviour well. Pupils respond well to this, enjoy their work and behave well. A strength of the teaching is the extent to which teachers give regular direct support and feedback to pupils as their work progresses. This enables the pupils to understand what they have done well and what they should do to improve. Information and communication technology is used well as a tool and pupils use computer drawing and design programs effectively in their work. Class lessons are supplemented well for those pupils who have a particular interest in art by an after-school club led by the subject's co-ordinator. In this, pupils from all age groups have recently produced impressive large-scale landscape sculptures.
97. There are attractive displays in communal areas of the school. These continue in several classrooms but, overall, the quality of classroom display varies considerably. A few teachers do not use display as well as others to stimulate pupils' interest and to celebrate achievements. The co-ordinator leads the subject well. She supports her colleagues with training and advice. She has an effective approach to how lessons are planned across the key stage that stresses the importance of developing core skills. While she has few opportunities to see her colleagues teach, she monitors planning and how sketchbooks are used to give herself a useful overview of standards. The teachers have used examples of pupils' work across the key stage effectively to assess how skills progress, for instance, in portrait drawing. The separate room assigned to art and design and technology is an asset. It gives pupils space to work on practical projects and is used well to encourage pupils to select their own materials and tools from the range provided.

DESIGN AND TECHNOLOGY

98. Only one lesson was seen during the inspection. Further evidence was gained from looking at pupils' previous work and from teachers' plans. The standards attained by 11-year-olds are in line with those expected nationally. Pupils' progress is good and is more even across the key

stage than at the time of the last inspection. Standards in designing, which were criticised then, have improved.

99. Pupils in Year 3 make simple plans for designs of items such as a picture frame and a sandwich. They produce staged instructions for how these are made and relevant diagrams and lists of components or ingredients. They understand how to construct a jinx corner for their picture frame and show how the finished product will be decorated attractively. They are studying how pistons work. The designs and products in Year 4 for purses and wallets and for lever controlled greetings cards show appropriate progress in pupils' skills. The designs are annotated well and pupils give well-considered evaluations of their results. Year 5 pupils have developed and recorded their ideas for a breakfast cereal bar. They used a conventional recipe format to show how this would be made and an understanding of cooking skills as they identified when to add ingredients such as chocolate chips or marshmallow pieces. They consider consumer preferences and marketing skills in their planning. Pupils in Year 6 are completing designs for controllable, moveable vehicles and produce sequenced drawings to show how these will be made. They apply their previous knowledge of items such as axles and motors to this task. They show confidence and practice in working to a design brief and in making appropriately labelled diagrams. This group of pupils has previously made good quality cam toys. Pupils in all year groups make good use of sketchbooks to record their work systematically.
100. Teaching in the lesson seen in Year 5 was good and indications from pupils' work are that teaching and learning are good across the key stage. The activities planned by teachers are interesting and challenging. They build well on pupils' previous skills. There is an appropriate four-year plan for how lessons will be planned across the key stage as a whole. In the lesson seen on creating a cereal bar, the teacher encouraged pupils' initiative and independence well and they responded to this by producing creative designs that were different for each group. The teacher made good use of real ingredients to help pupils' understanding of the task. She managed behaviour well and kept the class on task, thus making good use of their time. Teaching overall in design and technology links well to work in art and design. While teachers ensure that the objectives for each subject are considered in their own right, the skills and routines that are established, especially for designing and evaluation, are common to both subjects. The dedicated art and craft room is also used well in this subject.
101. There is currently no co-ordinator and limited monitoring of standards. However, the previous postholder established an appropriate programme of work for pupils and was active in ensuring that teachers' knowledge and skills have been updated by regular training. The stocks of practical resources that were criticised by the last inspection are now satisfactory.

GEOGRAPHY

102. In the lessons observed and the work seen, the standards achieved by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 are similar to those expected for their age. This represents an improvement since the last inspection.
103. By Year 6, most pupils have developed sound geographical skills and knowledge of the wider world. In Year 3, they are developing an understanding of maps using grids and can identify key features of settlements. They have also studied the weather and climate and made simple identifications of hot and cold areas of the world. As part of their work in environmental studies, they have learned about the rain forest as a habitat. In Year 4, the local area has been studied and this too has linked with environmental issues, including consideration of the siting of key facilities in a town and aspects of pollution, litter and drainage. Pupils have also begun to study a location in another continent in their work on an Indian village. This study continues in Year 5 and pupils learn about the location of rivers, hill areas and towns in India. They learn about the lifestyle, occupations and problems of people living there. Year 5 also study the use of water as part of their work in local geography, which is linked to their work on climate. In Year 6, pupils study river formation and the water cycle. They can identify the continents and many constituent countries on a world map as well as many of the main rivers and mountain ranges. The pupils have made a special study of mountain areas. This has

been effectively linked to their study of the environment and the effects of tourism in particular areas. The reduction in time and emphasis on the subject recently has led to a lack of depth in some topics.

104. The quality of teaching and learning is satisfactory and sometimes is good. Where teaching is good, teachers have good knowledge and understanding of the subject, the lessons are well planned to match the pupils' experience and interests, the input and questions help take learning forward and there is some opportunity for pupils to investigate problems and think for themselves. One such lesson occurred when one class considered the allocation of land rights in the Indian village. After pupils had read some material themselves, located plots of land on a map and calculated their size, they then considered issues involved in selling or leasing land to outsiders. The teacher's perceptive input and questions took learning forward so that pupils gained deeper understanding of the issues involved. Where teaching is less effective, the pupils have too few opportunities to investigate or think for themselves and teachers' constant input or questions give little time for thought or work. Pupils receive praise for their work when it is appropriate but there is little work displayed around the classroom and there are few geographical displays to help stimulate learning.
105. Pupils generally have good attitudes in lessons. They listen carefully to adult input and contribute appropriately to discussion, showing respect for others' views. They co-operate well with other pupils and are interested in the subject. Pupils with special educational needs and those learning English as an additional language make satisfactory progress, particularly when supported by an adult.
106. There is a clear policy and programme of work in place, which covers the National Curriculum appropriately. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The scheme is supported by published materials which reflect the nationally recommended topics for study. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and pupils' work each term. She plans to introduce an assessment system for the subject. She also hopes to be able to work alongside colleagues occasionally. At present, there are too few reference books and pictures readily available to support the curriculum and to give pupils sufficient opportunities for personal investigation and research. The school visits, such as the residential stay for pupils in Year 6, have helped to extend pupils' understanding of the subject.

HISTORY

107. In the lessons observed and the work seen, the standards attained by pupils by the end of Key Stage 2 are similar to those expected for their age. This maintains the standards of the last inspection. Pupils achieve well for their capabilities. By Year 6, most pupils have developed a sense of chronology; they understand simple time lines and that the past can be divided into different periods of time. In Year 3, pupils learn about the life of the Celts, Romans and Saxons and the differences in food, clothing, farming, buildings and settlements between past times and now. In Year 4, pupils have studied Vikings and are currently studying Tudor times, focusing on the life of Henry VIII. They can discuss his early life at court, of sport, music and feasting. Most can explain the importance of his having a son and his change of religion. They are interested in his meetings and battles with the King of France. In Year 5, work continues on everyday life and inventions in Tudor times. Pupils then study the Greeks, with a focus on life in Athens, including their contribution to architecture, drama and athletics. They have recorded work about the battles, armour and weapons of the period and the importance of the trireme. Pupils can identify the main features of the Olympic Games and their significance today. In Year 6, pupils study Victorians and make good links with local history. Currently, they are investigating how the coming of the railway influenced the lifestyle of those living locally. Pupils make good comparisons between life now and in Victorian times, in terms of transport, jobs, holidays, food and business, using data from a street in Luton in the past century.

108. Pupils in all year groups are able to record their work in history and the most capable have produced some detailed accounts of life in past times. The lower attainers sometimes do not complete written work in the time available.
109. The quality of teaching and learning was good in the lessons seen. Generally, teachers show good subject knowledge, which enables them to give clear explanations with good questions to motivate pupils and develop their understanding. Pupils are managed well and the mixture of teacher input and practical activities ensures that pupils keep on task. The calm atmosphere enables pupils to think, ask questions and contribute to discussion. In most classes, there is little pupils' work about history on display and few pictures or artefacts are available to stimulate learning. Where teaching is less effective, sessions are too short and pupils have insufficient time to complete activities. Pupils with special educational needs benefit from the support they receive in class. In some classes, pupils have too few opportunities for independent work and personal research. Pupils respond well in lessons and generally concentrate well. They listen carefully to their teacher's input, contribute to discussions appropriately and respect others' views. They co-operate well with other pupils and adults and are interested in the subject.
110. The management of the subject is satisfactory. There is a clear policy and scheme of work which ensures that work is planned for the four years of the key stage. This represents an improvement since the last inspection. The scheme of work is being suitably adapted to fit the revised National Curriculum. The school has adopted nationally recommended guidance on the topics for study. These are effectively supported by printed material. The co-ordinator monitors teachers' plans and pupils' work each term. She plans to introduce an assessment system for the subject and hopes to be given the opportunity to support staff in lessons. Currently, there are not enough artefacts or reference books to give pupils background information and help them find out more for themselves. Visits to the town and places of historical interest have extended pupils' understanding of the subject.

INFORMATION AND COMMUNICATION TECHNOLOGY

111. The standards attained by pupils by the age of 11 are above those seen in most schools and show considerable improvement since the last inspection. Pupils make good progress as they move through the school and develop a high degree of confidence in using the improved facilities available to them. These improvements have been achieved as a result of the development of the computer suite and of teachers' confidence and skills in teaching the full range of the subject's programmes of study. Teaching is planned according to a well-designed scheme of work and all classes have regular, extended sessions in the suite where they are able to have sustained 'hands-on' practice with the computers and other relevant resources. While the suite has rightly been a recent priority for funding, its development has led to pupils having little access to activities using information and communication technology in their classrooms. Teachers make effective links between the work carried out in the suite and classroom topics, including good support for pupils' developing literacy and numeracy skills. However, pupils are not able to use computers as everyday tools in the work they pursue in their own rooms.

112. In Year 3, pupils develop familiarity with the keyboard and improve their mouse skills. They load and save their work independently and are learning to use the Internet, for example, to send e-mails to another local school. In Year 4, they use an art program to link to their study of Pointillism; they interpret fish designs in this style, confidently using features such as spray painting, 'floodfill', symmetry, zoom and grids. During the inspection, pupils in both Years 5 and 6 monitored changes using external temperature and light sensors respectively. Pupils made good progress in setting up the programs and in creating and saving graphs of their results. Displays of pupils' work and scrutiny of their previous work in the suite show that the oldest pupils have covered a broad range of the curriculum and that some aspects of their work are of high quality. This includes multi-media presentations created to support their revision for the recent National Curriculum tests and a sensitive display on the theme of 'Beauty' that uses text and graphics in an attractive combination.
113. Teaching and learning are good. Teachers' subject knowledge is secure and is keeping pace with the frequent changes to the curriculum and to resources. Teachers have clear objectives for their lessons and high expectations of what pupils will achieve. As a result, pupils are clear about what they are intended to learn and are challenged in line with their capabilities. Teachers' written planning is of good quality and supports the lessons well. They explain tasks clearly and give frequent support to those who need help. At the same time, they enable the higher attainers to extend their skills at an appropriate rate. Good use is made of the resources of the computer suite. Teachers manage pupils' behaviour well and enable pupils to use their initiative, for example, when helping to set up equipment for the class or explaining short cuts in routines to their classmates.
114. The co-ordinator provides strong, energetic leadership. He works hard to support his colleagues in their planning for lessons and has frequent calls on his time to rectify any problems encountered with the hardware and software. His monitoring role has been constrained recently by the school's staffing difficulties. The school makes increasingly good use of national guidance for the subject and of training grants. Several after-school clubs meet and support pupils' learning well, giving them further opportunities to work on the computers. There is a useful initiative to forge links with parents in the subject and currently some parents attend daytime activities to use the computers themselves. This extends their skills and enables them to understand and support their children's work. Residential visits for the oldest pupils to an outdoor and computer centre also enhance provision.

MUSIC

115. Pupils achieve satisfactory standards in music. By the time they leave the school, the quality of their playing, composition and listening is at a level expected for pupils of this age. The quality of their singing is good and reflects pupils' enjoyment. Their attainment in music is better than that reported at the last inspection.
116. It was not possible to see enough lessons in music to make a clear judgement on the quality of teaching and learning. However, discussions with pupils and teachers about their work and scrutiny of teachers' documentation show that music is appropriately taught. During assemblies, and in class, pupils demonstrate the ability to sing songs from memory with a reasonable degree of quality. They know how to produce a rhythmic performance that is tuneful and given with considerable expression. Pupils listen carefully and sustain their concentration throughout their songs.
117. Pupils in Year 6 know a reasonable number of songs by heart. They have had some experience of composing their own music, as in music workshops when special instruments have been brought in to school as part of the music for the local carnival. They know of a range of music that includes rap, pop and jazz but have little knowledge of classical music. Pupils are aware that certain types of music originate from specific parts of the world and they can give examples of this. They understand that music affects their mood and can cause them to feel happy or sad depending upon their choice. In the one lesson observed in Year 3, pupils learned to play instruments with control as they explored musical ideas connected with their work in science on earth and space. They achieved success with their progress towards

composing simple sound sequences that had a clear start and a defined ending. Their attitudes towards music are positive and they take part willingly and with enthusiasm.

118. The co-ordinator is new in post but is enthusiastic about the subject and keen to learn. She has a developing understanding of her role and has already worked with a specialist trainer to help teachers develop their skills of teaching this subject. She has led the introduction of a new published scheme of work that is likely to be more effective for the teachers to use than its predecessor. She appreciates that music has not been a priority in the school in recent years because of the emphasis on English, mathematics and science in particular but, within these restrictions, is working towards ensuring that music continues to develop securely. In the last year, the school has worked on two carol concerts and a Christmas production. The school does not have a consistent system of assessment in place to ensure that pupils' development of skills is carefully monitored. Musical activities are supported well by a programme of instrumental tuition led by specialist teachers from the local authority.

PHYSICAL EDUCATION

119. By the time pupils leave the school at 11, their physical skills are at a level expected for pupils of this age in the aspects of the curriculum observed during the inspection. This is similar to the standards achieved by pupils during the last inspection. Pupils, including those with special educational needs, make good progress with their learning overall. The school provides a suitable range of activities for pupils of this age group to ensure that all appropriate elements of the curriculum are taught.
120. The quality of teaching is good. Teachers have a suitable knowledge and understanding of physical education and apply this appropriately during lessons. They teach pupils to listen carefully and respond quickly and safely to instructions, as in a Year 3 lesson on creative dance where pupils learned quickly to develop simple routines of their own with a partner in time to music.
121. The quality of planning is generally effective with a clear focus on what pupils are expected to achieve by the end of the lesson. Most teachers make sure that pupils understand where they are heading at the beginning of the lesson and this ensures that steady progress is made. Teachers make effective use of a variety of methods to ensure that pupils remain on task and interested in what they are doing. In the majority of lessons, teachers make sure that pupils work hard physically. This aspect of teaching is particularly successful since a considerable number of pupils do not expect to have to get into action as a matter of course and it is a credit to teachers that this happens. A good example of this was seen in a Year 5 lesson on creative dance where the teacher moved the various aspects through at a fast pace. This, combined with a good choice of music, ensured that pupils were fully involved, enjoyed what they were doing and made good progress with their dance routines as a result.
122. Pupils of all ages have the opportunity to take part in swimming at the local pool for eight sessions a year. Although these are beneficial to pupils, they are limited in value because of the total amount of time that pupils actually spend in the water learning to swim. This is partly because of the time taken to walk to the pool, to change and because the pool instructors tend to teach pupils one at a time which means that a considerable amount of time is spent waiting on the side of the pool.
123. Younger pupils successfully learn to develop different dancing skills and refine their own phrases in pairs and small groups. They become aware of the importance of rhythm and of the need to be dynamic in approach to be successful. Older pupils develop their ability to discuss and analyse the work of others, to say what is good about a performance and what could be improved. They do not find this easy to do but improve their ability to do so from year to year as a direct result of their teachers' encouragement as part of lessons and as a critical part of planning. Pupils in Year 6 learn to play in small team game situations relatively well. Most understand the importance of playing by the rules when taking part as a member of a team but a small group has a negative attitude that detracts from their ability to gain the maximum benefit from otherwise good lessons.

124. The co-ordinator for this subject has a good understanding of what should be taught as well as of the strengths and weaknesses in the subject and what needs to be done to improve it. He works extremely hard at organising sport for the whole school and takes on a heavy responsibility for after-school activities with some limited help from other members of staff. He ensures that there is a good balance of activities throughout the year and has developed a four-year plan to guide teachers' work across the key stage to ensure that pupils' achievements are continuous and progressive. The school does not have a consistent system of assessment in place to ensure that teachers record and know what individual pupils can and cannot do. Resources are satisfactory, although some of the gymnastic equipment in the hall shows signs of age.

RELIGIOUS EDUCATION

125. Pupils of all abilities make good progress in religious education. By the time they leave the school, the standards achieved are higher than the expectations laid down in the locally Agreed Syllabus. These standards have improved since the last inspection.
126. The quality of teaching and learning is good overall, particularly with reference to the way in which teachers ensure that pupils develop a wide and considered understanding of various religious faiths and practices. Teachers have a firm knowledge of this subject and use this effectively to extend and increase the level of pupils' understanding.
127. In Year 3, as a result of good clear planning and a defined structure to the lesson seen, pupils revised their present knowledge of some of the miracles of Jesus. They developed a new awareness of some of the deeper meanings behind the story of the 'Feeding of the five thousand'. This was successful because of the good quality of questioning that prompted pupils to think through what they were hearing and so enabled them to clarify their thoughts. When teachers move lessons at a fast pace and give positive encouragement to pupils to express their views, as was the case here, pupils enjoy their work and are enthusiastic about making a response.
128. Pupils in Year 4 learn, for example, about some of the key features of Sikhism and combine this with an increased understanding of the value of sharing with others as they learn about the Sikh food-sharing custom of Langer. Such new and varied experiences help pupils to strengthen their awareness of differences between peoples and how they can possibly be resolved. Pupils in Year 5 learn about particular ways of doing things in a Hindu culture such as the custom of tying a rakhi around the wrist to symbolise the strength of a relationship.
129. By Year 6, pupils have increased their knowledge of a variety of stories from the Bible including the Christian view of the Creation. They discuss and debate the various points of view about this, including the humanist position. Because teachers provide pupils with opportunities to say what they think and because they encourage them constantly to see things from the perspectives of others, pupils become increasingly tolerant of people whose way of life is different from their own. For example, a Muslim pupil in Year 4 showed a clear knowledge of some of the differences between her religion and that of Hindus and spoke about these with refreshing maturity and understanding.
130. The subject is managed well. The co-ordinator has a clear understanding of what her responsibilities involve and has, with the support of teachers, produced a revised version of aspects of the local syllabus to make it more applicable to the needs of pupils of this school. She regularly meets with teachers in each year group and evaluates the quality of their planning. The local syllabus makes provision for ongoing assessment of work covered by pupils, and teachers use these opportunities as part of their teaching programme.